An observation that needs to be stressed is that most vendors are selling more than one kind of commodity. At Abu Haraz, for example, eighteen (24%) of the vegetable sellers are also dealing in wild plant foods and fifteen (20%) are dealing in cereal grains. Evidently, vendors mix commodities to attract more customers and to reduce their risks. Perishable foods are sold in conjunction with foods that keep well. Goods which sell early, like tomatoes, are paired with goods that will sell later in the day, like shelled groundnuts.

The periodic vendor is called faraash in Arabic, a term derived from farash which is the mat or groundcloth on which the vendor displays his goods.

**Government Administered Crop Market**

Rural markets have been established by the rural councils to be a chief source of tax revenues. The typical pattern is to find a large rural market in the same village as the council headquarters while a number of satellite markets occupy secondary villages. The satellite markets are often set up near the boundaries of administrative districts reflecting the competition between neighboring rural councils to capture a larger tax base. El-Geifil market is an example of this phenomenon. It is in competition with two neighboring markets--Umm Hemeira and el-Karra--which are in different administrative districts.

Sesame, groundnuts, gum arabic and karkadee (roselle) are the major cash crops that are sold in government markets in our study area. At a minimum, the rural market is staffed with: (1) a clerk (kaatib as-suug) whose responsibility is to keep records of all sales, assess taxes, and hold the tax revenues in a strong box until the market supervisor (mulaahiz) collects it (once a week or less frequently); (2) a guard (ghafiir) to maintain law and order. In the larger markets the clerk is helped by a deputy. Alternatively, small markets which are in the same general locale and which take place on different days of the week often share the same clerk, who travels back and forth to meet the marketing schedule.

Government administered crop markets were found to have two fundamental institutional forms. On the one hand, there are crop markets at which the weight of each crop is measured on a scales (mizaan) and its price is determined by buyers' bidding at auction (dalaala). By this procedure--which we may designate the mizaan system--the taxation on crops sold may be determined with considerable precision. The most important taxes assessed in our area are gibaana (a market use fee which is 0.150/kantar) and 9ushuur (an ad valorem tax of 15% of the total price). On the other hand, at small, remote crop markets a procedure exists for selling crops that is little more than a formalization of the buying-by-the-mid procedure which village merchants use at their shops. In this case, the crop is measured volumetrically rather than by weight and a standard formula for converting from volume

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70 Watermelon seeds are an important produce in el-Obeid Crop Market but sales of this commodity do not occur to a significant degree in any of the rural markets we are studying.